

An overview of Hurricane Helene's impact on the Warrenton, GA area and resources from the Department of Community

Affairs for disasters

Presented by Jeffrey Fowler & Jessica Worthington

JEFFREY FOWLER

- Community Relations & Project Director, Warren County Board of Commissioners
 - President & CEO, Warren County Chamber of Commerce
 - Executive Director, Hometown Warrenton Main Street program
 - Executive Director, Warrenton Downtown Development Authority
- Graduate of Valdosta State University with a Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership, Minor in Public Administration — Currently a Master of Public Administration student
- Past President, Georgia Downtown Association



HURRICANE HELENE — AT A GLANCE

- Helene made landfall in Florida's Big Bend region on September 26, 2024, with sustained winds reaching 140 mph (225 km/h).
- With its 140 mph winds, Helene became the strongest hurricane ever recorded to make landfall in Florida's Big Bend region.
- The storm's rapid intensification and vast size made it one of the most expansive and damaging hurricanes to strike the Southeast U.S.
- The storm entered Georgia as a strong Category 2 hurricane, bringing damaging winds and heavy rains.
- Destruction: Thousands of trees downed, major damage in Augusta (gusts ≥ 100 mph), and widespread destruction across numerous counties.
- Sources: FEMA, WRDW, NOAA



HURRICANE HELENE — GEORGIA BY THE NUMBERS

- Overall damage: Initial estimates placed the economic toll on Georgia—including agriculture and forestry—at least \$5.5 billion. Later updates raised this to \$6.46 billion, including \$3.2 billion in direct farm-level losses.
- Sector breakdown (from UGA's November 2024 impact report):
 - Cotton: ~\$560 million in combined direct, indirect, and induced losses
 - Pecans: ~\$291 million total losses (including replanting)
 - Peanuts: ~\$71 million
 - Vegetables: ~\$209 million
 - Other crops (tobacco, citrus, blueberries): additional tens of millions
- **Sources:** UGA Extension, Forestry Commission, Office of Governor.

HURRICANE HELENE — GEORGIA BY THE NUMBERS

- Property damage: Over 212,747 homes were damaged, amounting to more than \$1.5 billion in property loss.
- Thousands of roads and bridges across Georgia were washed out or heavily damaged.
- Critical routes in Augusta and surrounding counties were blocked by fallen trees and powerlines.
- 1.8+ million Georgians lost power immediately after the storm.
- Georgia Power called it the largest power restoration effort in state history, with most service restored within 8 days.
- **Sources:** UGA Extension, Forestry Commission, Office of Governor, Georgia Power.































































PERSPECTIVE

- First photo taken on o9/28/2024
- Last photo taken on 10/11/2024
- 14 straight days of recovery efforts



TIMELINE ON ELECTRICITY

Storm and Power

- o9/27/2024 Power went out about 5:00 AM.
- 10/06/2024 First power returned to Warrenton, GA.
- 10/11/2024 Power completely restored to Warrenton, GA
- 10/25/2024 Power restored completely to Warren County, GA.





SO, THE STORM HAPPENED? WHAT'S NEXT?

LET'S GO BACKWARDS!

Connect with Emergency Management

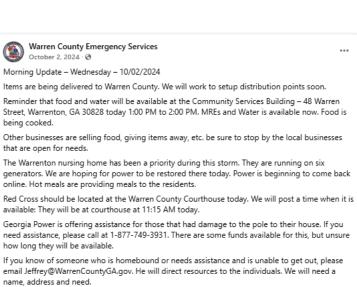
- Identify and build a relationship with your County EMA Director.
- Understand how downtown fits into the county's emergency plans.

This is the most important step!





OO Gina Browning Price, Kelly S. Evans and 39 others



need assistance, please call at 1-877-749-3931. There are some funds available for this, but unsure how long they will be available.

If you know of someone who is homebound or needs assistance and is unable to get out, please email Jeffrey@WarrenCountyGA.gov. He will direct resources to the individuals. We will need a name, address and need.

Feel free to begin completing applications at https://www.disasterassistance.gov. This will allow you to get ahead of the game for when the disaster is declared for Warren County on the federal level.

You should see an increased law enforcement presence in Warren County due to break ins. We are thankful to the Georgia State Patrol for providing this.

Water is operational in all cities. Reminder that one case of water is available per car at the Emergency Services Building - 169 Hwy. 80 N., Warrenton, GA 30828

We are thankful to the National Guard and local strike teams that have been clearing roads out in Warren County.

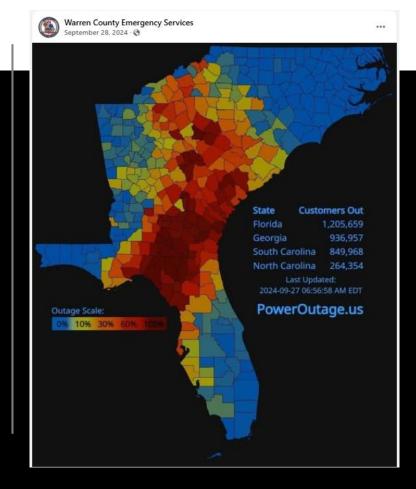


30 comments 103 shares

WARRENCOUNTYGA.COM

Hurricane Response

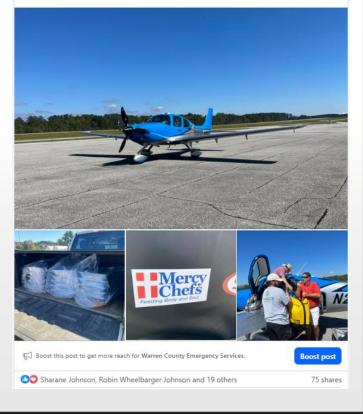
Announcement for 10/1/2024 The Warren County Emergency Management Agency is releasing the following update: Food will be served at the Community Services Building for lunch. It will begin between...

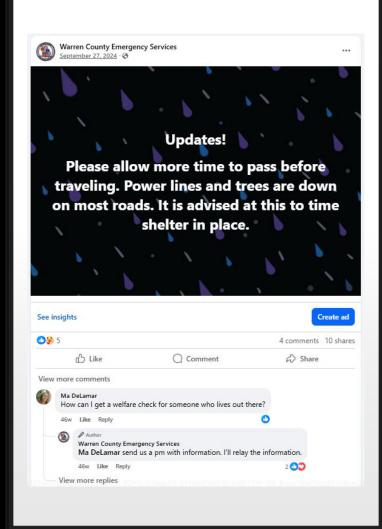


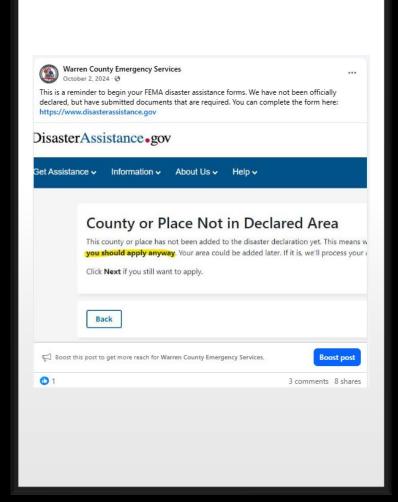
Food has been flown in from Mercy Chefs, You can pick up food at following churches out in County:

- 1. Grace Baptist Church 2289 GA-80
- 2. Mountain Beulah Church 5537 Mount Beulah Road
- 3. New Salem Baptist Church 5059 Macon Hwy
- 4. Church of Christ 2175 Thomson Hwy
- 5. Pleasant Grove Baptist Church 7 Hall Street
- 6. Norwood Methodist Church 224 Church Street
- 7. Macedonia Methodist Church 7257 GA-80 N

Please share!









Evening Update - Wednesday - 10/02/2024

We are continuing to see items being delivered to Warren County. Today, we saw four semi-trucks deliver MRE (Meals Ready to Eat) and hundreds of cases of water. We will see more items delivered as we move forward.

Reminder that food and water will be available at the Community Services Building – 48 Warren Street, Warrenton, GA 30828 tomorrow, October 10/3/2024 beginning at 11:00 AM. We will continue to have more and more resources available.

Other businesses are selling food, giving items away, etc. be sure to stop by the local businesses that are open for needs. Please be sure to support local businesses in their times of need.

The Warrenton nursing home has been a priority during this storm. Hot meals are providing meals to the residents. Power has been restored to the facility as of today – October 2nd, 2024.

Georgia Power is offering assistance for those that had damage to the pole to their house. If you need assistance, please call at 1-877-749-3931. There are some funds available for this, but unsure how long they will be available.

If you know of someone who is homebound or needs assistance and is unable to get out, please email Jeffrey@WarrenCountyGA.gov. He will direct resources to the individuals. We will need a name, address, contact information, and need.

Feel free to begin completing applications at https://www.disasterassistance.gov. This will allow you to get ahead of the game for when the disaster is declared for Warren County on the federal level.

Business support is listed on the Warren County website. You can find it at the following link: https://www.warrencountyga.com/hurricane-response.html

You should see an increased law enforcement presence in Warren County due to break ins. We are thankful to the Georgia State Patrol for providing this.

Water is operational in all cities. Reminder that one case of water is available per car at the Emergency Services Building - 169 Hwy. 80 N., Warrenton, GA 30828 starting at 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM

We are thankful to the National Guard and local strike teams that have been clearing roads out in Warren County. Today, we have had an additional 18 national guard individuals located to Warren County to assist.

We are scheduled to have a small amount of bottled oxygen delivered. If citizens are in need, please reach out to (706) 465-3358 to request oxygen.

Governor Kemp is working to suspend the fuel tax on 10/3/2024. Farmers are being allowed to utilize red fuel on the roadway as needed.

Individuals that are requesting a site for tree debris. This site must be coordinated with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division and Georgia Forestry. When approved, we will let you know.



Boost post



9 comments 16 shares



John Graham Chairman, Warren County Board of Commissioners 521 Main Street, Warrenton, GA 30808 John@WarrenCountyGA.gov (706) 455-2171

10/3/2024

To the Citizens of Warren County,

In the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, the Warren County Board of Commissioners remains steadfast in our commitment to supporting our community. We are working closely with all county departments to provide essential services, ensure your safety, and assist with recovery efforts during this challenging time.

To keep you informed, our dedicated staff, stationed at the Chamber/Hometown office, have been appointed as the official Public Information contacts. They are actively updating all social media channels and county websites with the latest information. For the most accurate and timely updates, please visit the Warren County Emergency Services page, which serves as the central hub for all disaster-related information.

In addition, every county employee is contributing to relief afforts, with many assisting at the Community Services Building. Here, essential supplies are being distributed to individuals and families in need. We encourage those affected to visit the center for any assistance required.

We are also in ongoing communication with State and Federal officials, working diligently to secure a formal disaster declaration from FEMA. At this time, we are awaiting confirmation, and we will keep the community informed as we receive updates.

Our thoughts are with everyone affected by this disaster. Please know that we are here to support you, and together, we will rebuild and recover.

Sincerely

John Graham

Chairman, Warren County Board of Commissioners

Cathy T. Norris

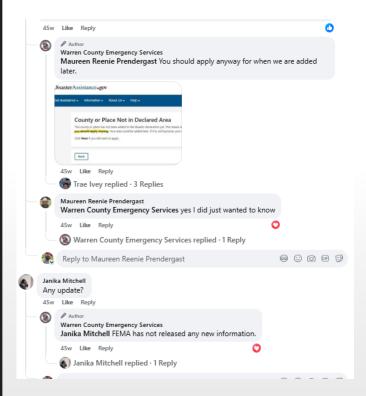
Richard Burley, Jr.

John R. Graham Chairman Rita Johnson Commissioner, District 2 Porsha Johnson County Clerk

P.O. Box 46 • Warrenton, GA 30828 (706) 465-2171 FAX: (706) 465-1300 TDD: (706) 465-2171

Warren County is an equal opportunity employer and provider

Gateway to Rural Georgia





Warren County Emergency Services

October 3, 2024 · 🚱

Reminder- we are giving out items today at the Community Services Building. Come out to get what you need! Drop a comment with needs so we can prepare for future dates.











Boost this post to get more reach for Warren County Emergency Services.

Boost post



OO Audrey Hawkins, RobinFaye South and 21 others

18 comments 22 shares



Warren County Emergency Services October 3, 2024 · ♦

Evening Update - Thursday - 10/03/2024

We are thankful to everyone that has continued to send items to Warren County. We have gotten more deliveries today. We will continue to receive more items tomorrow on Friday.

Reminder that food and water will be available at the Community Services Building - 48 Warren Street, Warrenton, GA 30828 tomorrow, October 10/3/2024 beginning at 11:00 AM. The new items for today are tarps and ice. We will look at adding more items tomorrow depending on the supply.

We were thankful to see a FEMA representative in Warren County today to review property damage. They are reviewing property damage to houses. Also, we are thankful to see representatives from Senator Warnock's office. We appreciate their support at this time.

Warren County has been visited by representatives from Senator Warnock, Senator Burns, and Representative Jackson. Warren County has been in contact with Representative Allen, Senator Ossoff, Speaker of the House, and Governor of Georgia.

If you own property, please complete the local: Hurricane Helene Response Form. You may do so at the following link: https://forms.office.com/r/8tiYgMYHtr. This form is crucial for FEMA response. They are looking for severe house damage.

Other businesses are selling food, giving items away, etc. be sure to stop by the local businesses that are open for needs. Please be sure to support local businesses in their times of need.

If you know of someone who is homebound or needs assistance and is unable to get out, please email Jeffrey@WarrenCountyGA.gov or call (706) 465-9604 and leave a voicemail. We will check the voicemails for information. Please leave name, address, phone number, and needs. We will then direct resources to the individuals.

Georgia Power is offering assistance for those that had damage to the pole to their house. If you need assistance, please call at 1-877-749-3931. There are some funds available for this, but unsure how long they will be available.

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Warren County Emergency Services

October 5, 2024 - 🚱

We're hitting the road!!

Tomorrow, we will begin to reach out further into Warren County. Please review the following locations. Please note: Times may change depending on restocking. We will try our best to stick as close as possible to these times. Please share to get the word out! Supplies! MREs, waters, and morel

10:00 AM to 11:00 AM

Macedonia Methodist Church - 7257 GA-80 N. Warrenton, GA 30828 Panhandle Fire Station - 6002 Purvis School Road, Stapleton, GA 30823 Long Creek Baptist Church - 290 Long Creek Church Road, Warrenton, GA 30828

12:00 PM to 1:00 PM

Norwood Fire Station - 464 Cobb Street, Norwood, GA 30821

Little Briar Creek Baptist Church - 691 Little Briar Creek Church Road, Warrenton, GA 30828

2:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Camak Fire Station - 15 Johnson Street, Warrenton, GA 30828 Johnson Church - 4228 Gibson Highway, Warrenton GA 30828





WHAT DOYOU NEED TO DO?

NO ONE-SIZE-FITS ALL

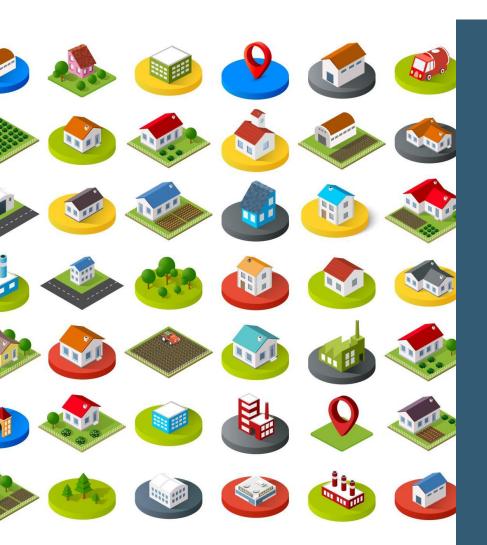
- Every community is different size, resources, risks, and partners vary.
- What works in one downtown may not work in another.
- Preparedness depends on:
 - Your local resources
 - Your relationships
 - Your community's unique needs
- The goal: find what fits YOUR community before the storm hits.

PEOPLE & RELATIONSHIPS



- Know your County EMA Director and emergency contacts.
- Build relationships with City/County government, utilities, chamber, nonprofits, schools, churches.
- Identify vulnerable populations downtown (elderly, residents in upper floors, unhoused individuals).
- Develop a business contact list (owners, managers, after-hours numbers).

CRITICAL ASSETS & INFRASTRUCTURE



- Map out key buildings and services (banks, grocery, pharmacy, gas, clinics).
 - If available, provide your database and photos to local businesses doing insurance claims.
- Identify historic structures or buildings especially vulnerable to storm damage.
- Shelters, schools, civic centers, and churches that might serve evacuees.
 - What businesses would open their doors if needed?
- Potential distribution points for food/water/ice.
- Large parking lots or open spaces for staging.

COMMUNICATION & MESSAGING



Establish multiple channels to reach businesses and residents (phone tree, email list, group text, social media).



Draft sample emergency messages now, so you're not writing from scratch under stress.



Plan who communicates what — avoid duplicate/conflicting info between city, county, chamber, etc.



What do you do when there is no cell service for 4-5 days? Do your businesses know where to go for information?

CONTINUITY & OPERATIONS

Decide how the Downtown program itself will continue during disruptions.

Identify backup office/workspace if your building is unusable.

Have remote access to files, financials, and contact lists.

Pre-plan how to cancel/postpone events or activate volunteer groups.

Review insurance coverage (property, liability, event cancellation).

Identify who steps in if the director is unavailable.

NO POWER FOR DAYS



How will downtown businesses protect perishables or sensitive equipment?



Where can residents or visitors charge medical devices, phones, or get cooled/warmed?



Do you know which businesses or facilities have generators?

NO CELL SERVICE FOR DAYS

How will you reach businesses, staff, and emergency partners?

Do you have a backup contact method (landlines, radios, in-person check-ins)?

Who becomes the point of contact for downtown if you can't call/text/email?

NO FIBER INTERNET FOR MONTHS



How will city hall, banks, and businesses handle transactions and records?



Are there workarounds for card payments, payroll, or bill pay?



What does "recovery" look like if your communication/marketing tools are offline?

BE READY. BE THE HERO.

- Disasters are not a question of if only when.
- Your community will look to you for leadership when the lights go out.
- The work you do before the storm determines how fast downtown recovers.
- Take these questions home. Talk with your EMA director, your board, your businesses.
- When the next disaster strikes, be ready to step up as the trusted guide and stabilizing voice your community needs.

NOW, WHAT RESOURCES ARE OUT THERE?

JESSICA WORTHINGTON

- Director, Office of Community Housing and Development, Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- Also serve as the agency's RSF 4 Coordinator
- Graduate of Tulane University with an MPH in Disaster Managment



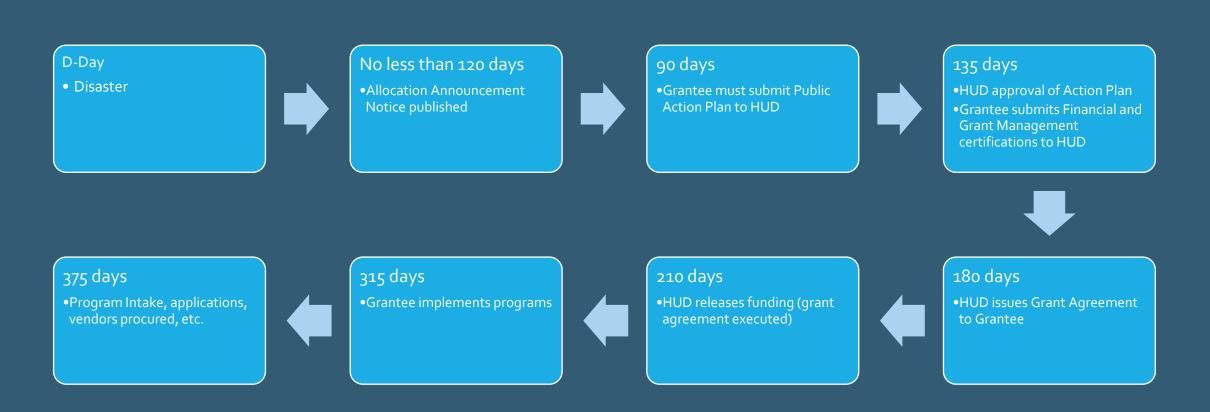
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT – DISASTER RECOVERY (CDBG-DR)

- In the event of a Presidential Disaster Declaration Congress *may* appropriate funds to be used for significant unmet needs for long term recovery. HUD allocates those funds to States and, in some cases, local governments to fund eligible recovery activities.
- CDBG-DR funds are intended to supplement other Federal recovery assistance programs, and in some cases can also be used as a match to other Federal funds.
- CDBG-DR funds are often referred to as the "funds of last resort."
- Historically CDBG-DR funds for Presidentially declared disaster in Georgia funds are awarded to the State and managed by the Department of Community Affairs(DCA).

HOW DOES HUD ALLOCATE CDBG-DR FUNDS?

- HUD allocations are based upon a formula that looks primarily at FEMA and SBA applicant data
- For a CDBG-DR allocation to be awarded the following is required:
 - A disaster must receive a Presidential Declaration
 - FEMA Public Assistance *αnd* FEMA Individual Assistance must be awarded to a community to be eligible for CDBG-DR
 - Serious unmet needs in the areas of housing, economic revitalization, and infrastructure are aggregated
 - \$2,000,000 to get a "Zip Code" allocation
 - \$10,000,000 to get a "County" allocation

CDBG-DR IS LONG-TERM RECOVERY



CDBG-DR funds can take 495+ days to go into effect after the date of a disaster!

UNMET NEEDS ASSESSMENT

DCA examined the unmet needs in the areas of housing, infrastructure, economic revitalization, and mitigation. This assessment found the following:

- Housing accounted for 76% of the unmet need with approximately \$1,102,522,201 in remaining needs
- Infrastructure accounted for 12% of the unmet need with approximately \$179,355,554 in remaining needs
- Economic Revitalization accounted for 12% of the unmet need with approximately \$178,276,598 in remaining needs

All percentages and dollar amounts are estimates based on the best available data at the time

MOST IMPACTED AND DISTRESSED (MID) AREAS

- HUD identifies MID areas based upon the aggregate unmet need formula
- The 2023/2024 hurricane allocation had twenty (20) HUD-identified MIDs – most were zip codes
- DCA will be expanding these zip codes to include the entire county (per regulation)
- 80% of funds must be expended in these counties (per regulation)

- DCA may be able to select Granteeidentified MID areas from counties within the disaster declaration that received FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) and Public Assistance (PA) funds
- A maximum of 20% of funds can be expended in these counties (per regulation)
- Data must be quantifiable and verifiable (not all eligible counties will qualify)

MOST IMPACTED AND DISTRESSED (MID)

Appling	Clinch	Jenkins	Screven
Atkinson	Coffee	Johnson	Tattnall
Bacon	Colquitt	Lanier	Telfair
Ben Hill	Columbia	Laurens	Tift
Berrien	Cook	Liberty	Toombs
Brooks	Effingham	Lincoln	Treutlen
Bryan	Emanuel	Long	Ware
Bulloch	Evans	Lowndes	Washington
Burke	Glynn	McDuffie	Wayne
Candler	Jeff Davis	Pierce	Wheeler
Chatham	Jefferson	Richmond	Wilkes

PROPOSED BUDGET

Category	Proposed Budget	Percentage
Administration	\$13,286,300	5%
Planning	\$3,500,000	1%
Housing	\$188,939,700	72%
Infrastructure	\$50,000,000	19%
HMGP Match	\$10,000,000	3%
Total	\$265,726,000	100%

CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

- Administration funds for general administration of the funds will be used to support DCA's oversight of the award, including but not limited to staff salaries, overhead, training, vendor management, etc.
- Planning funds for Georgia Emergency Management/Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS)
 to create Disaster Recovery and Redevelopment Plans (DRRP) with the affected local
 governments and limited funds for local government planning needs
- Housing funds for a single-family Homeowner Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Program (HRRP), an Affordable Rental Rehabilitation Program (ARRP), and an Affordable Rental Housing Development program
- Infrastructure funds for local governments to apply to public infrastructure needs including but not limited to water/sewer/stormwater, streets & drainage, bridges, etc.
- HMGP Match funds for assisting local governments with a portion the match required for all Hazard Mitigation Grant Program projects

HOUSING PROGRAMS OVERVIEW

Grantee Housing Programs Overview				
Eligible Cost Category	CDBG-DR Allocation Amount	% of CDBG-DR Allocation for LMI Benefit		
Single-family Homeowner Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Program	\$103,916,835	70%		
Affordable Rental Housing Development	\$20,000,000	100%		
Affordable Rental Rehabilitation Program	\$65,022,865	70%		
Housing Program Total:	\$188,939,700	73.2%		
Total	\$188,939,700	73.2%		

INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM

Grantee Infrastructure Programs Overview			
Eligible Cost Category	CDBG-DR Allocation Amount	% of CDBG-DR Allocation for LMI Benefit	
Competitive Application Infrastructure Program	\$50,000,000	70%	
Infrastructure Program Total:	\$50,000,000	70%	
Total	\$50,000,000	70%	

HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM (HMGP) MATCH

Grantee HMGP Match Programs Overview				
Eligible Cost Category	CDBG-DR Allocation Amount	% of CDBG-DR Allocation for LMI Benefit		
HMGP Match	\$10,000,000	100%		
HMGP Match Program Total:	\$10,000,000	100%		
Total	\$10,000,000	100%		

POTENTIALLY ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Housing

- Single-family stickbuilt rehabilitation and reconstruction
- Manufactured
 Housing Units
 (MHU)/Mobile Home
 replacement
- Rental properties 1-4 units
- Affordable rental unit development

Infrastructure

- Water/Sewer
- Communications
- Streets/Drainage
- Buildings (limited options)
- StormwaterManagement

HMGP Match

 Infrastructure and housing activities approved by GEMA/FEMA (must be a CDBG eligible project)

70% of funds must benefit low-to-moderate income population 15% of funds dedicated to mitigation related efforts
All funded activities must have a tie-back to the storms

QUESTIONS

Jessica Worthington

Director, Office of Community Housing Development

Jessica.worthington@dca.ga.gov

Kathleen Tremblay

Program Director, CDBG-Disaster Recovery

Kathleen.tremblay@dca.ga.gov

dca.georgia.gov

https://surveys.georgiahrrp.com/survey/storms_2024